

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

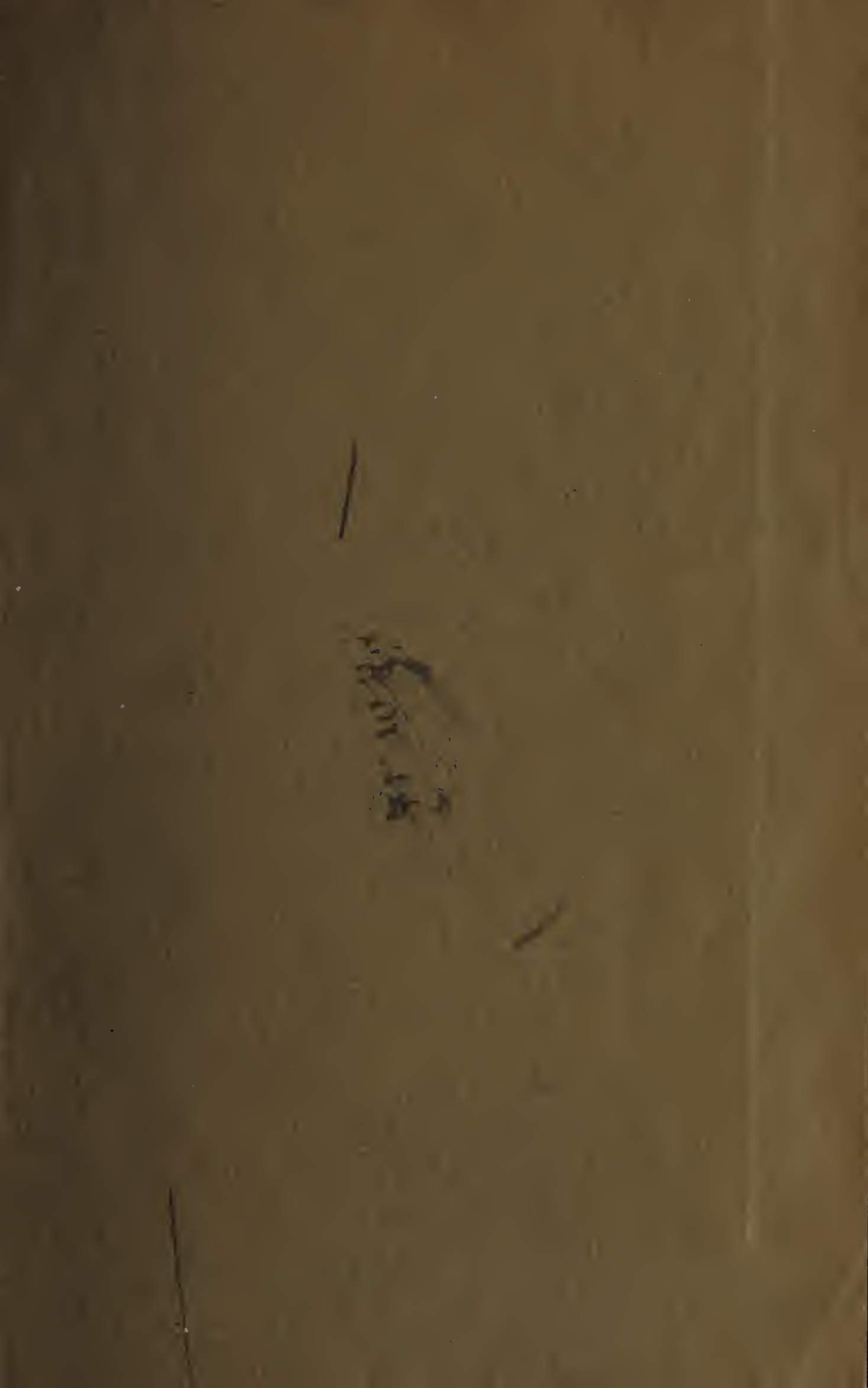


3 9999 08714 044 6

5579.86

5579.86





BOSTON

BY-WAYS TO HELL.

A VISIT TO THE

* * * 570 86

DENS OF NORTH STREET.

.....
.....
.....

BOSTON,

J. M. USHER, ... NATION OFFICE, ... 27 CORNHILL,

Also, at the State Temperance Alliance Rooms, 49 Washington Street.

S. W. Hodges, G. S., S. of T., 58 Bromfield Street,

And at the Good Templars' Headquarters, 50 Bromfield Street.

1867.

214, 527
Apr 19, 1877

5579 86

PREFACE.

The following chapters were prepared by a special correspondent of the *Watchman and Reflector* expressly for that paper, and by editorial request. The many fearless philanthropists, and lovers of reform, among the readers of that journal, welcomed the articles as timely, and in the true spirit of Christian enterprise, and declared that the exposure of the infamies of the city of Boston through the columns of a religious newspaper was as well-conceived variation of the voice of the *pulpit* against civil and social evils. The more "conservative," however, of the patrons of the *Watchman and Reflector*, influenced as we think by a false sensibility, protested against the publication of the "By-ways to Hell" and in consequence, the third chapter was suppressed.

Though more than two years have passed since the preparation of these articles, yet the pictures which they present are still too true of Boston as it is, and the friends of Temperance feeling unwilling that any direct means of acquainting the public with the facts of intemperance and social vice should miss a faithful trial, have decided, with the author's permission, to print this true story of a visit to the dens of North street, in the hope that the revelations here made will kindle the righteous indignation of every friend of humanity, and quicken the champions of good morals to more resolute efforts.

The unprejudiced reader will infer from the disclosures of this tract, the utter folly of a License Law and the necessity of putting the local police under the control of the State.

NOT FOR SALE

BOSTON BY-WAYS TO HELL.

A Visit to the Dens of North Street.

Hark! was that sound a gust of revelry?
I seem to be descending where the world
Lets out her passing souls. The iron walls
Of Hell frown far away with turrets swarmed
By watchful demons, that scowl to and fro
And hail their victims with a bitter laugh.

CHAPTER I.

THE night was dark and the snow fell fast, as we approached the narrow door of the first dance-house. Unseemly sounds of human voices came from within, mixed with the squealing of fiddles and the disorderly shuffle of many feet; but the officer pushed his way up the crooked staircase, and we followed him through a passage barely wide enough for a single person, into a long, low-ceiled hall, occupied by negroes, mulattoes and vulgar whites. A dance was just over when we entered, and the revellers were coming from the bar, male and female, with cigars in their mouths; but the music from a fiddle, a bass-viol and an old piano kept on at the farther end of the hall, and a stumpy negro, with his hat on the back of his head, paraded up and down the floor, shouting, impatiently, for another set.

“All han’s roun’ for another stan-to? Get up and choose

yer partners, gen'lem! Be lively, there, now; Fiddler won't play for nothin'! All han's up!" Then in a lower tone, half-confidentially, "Got any money, Sam? Got any money, Johnson?" and Pete, and Bill, and Quon, and Cuffee, and Joe were interrogated in turn to the same purpose, till, having ascertained as clearly as could reasonably be expected, the condition of these worthy "gen'lemn's" finances, this enterprising master of ceremonies paused in his peripatetic labors directly in front of a group of smoking, swearing negresses, and striking an attitude meant to be very impressive, drawled out to them, with a grin:

"*Ladies*, will ye have a da-nce?"

Matters seemed to progress slowly, and we asked the policeman if our presence threw any restraint upon the flow of the festivities.

"Not at all," he replied. "Don't you see they take no notice of us? When the money begins to run low they are shy of dancing, for they are obliged to 'treat' after every set."

At last the fiddlers lost their patience and took the floor, apparently disgusted with the ill-success of their stumpy friend, to do what they could themselves towards stirring up the revelry again. Their arguments proved more efficient than their music, and a number, mostly females, were soon upon their feet. The greater part of the "gen'lem" betrayed incorrigible laziness.

Again the fiddlers struck up; the old piano clanged and tinkled, and four men and ten women who were on the floor began to hop and whirl. The profits of the hall were secure for another fifteen minutes.

We watched the dancers at their sport. Never was seen a more ill-assorted company. Their clothes were evidently a promiscuous collection from all the slop-shops; dirty, loose, forlorn in fashion and fabric, and heterogeneous beyond all classification or description. One of the men danced in an old checked shirt, another in a red jacket and a dirty white shirt, with a straw hat

on his head. For head-dresses, the negresses and mulatto women wore, some of them, turbans, some of them last year's bonnets, and one tall, square-faced quadrcon girl sported a wide-awake that made her look like a monster; but the greater part of them wore 'clouds' that had once been white but had grown, by frequent soil and smoke, as dingy as an old sail, and under these woollen coverings their swarthy faces glistened with excitement and sweat.

The rest of their ball-room make-up was quite as ridiculous as the headgear. Gowns of every color and gowns of no color; gowns of ancient giugham, gowns of faded calico and gowns of stained and draggled silk; while two or three wore long water-proofs, as if to cover up absolute rags. Brass and bone rings and bracelets abounded. Ears, fingers, arms and hair were loaded with tawdry finery.

In general the toilet-taste of the whites who were present was in perfect keeping with their company. The morals of the place must needs have foul and slatternly clothes. The glass jewelry and base-metal trinkets became them.

One white girl had evidently done her utmost to maintain pretensions to elegance. She was one of the fallen who belonged in another saloon, but who chose to vary the round of her pleasures by cultivating acquaintance with all colors and nationalities in the circle of the abandoned society of North End. She was dressed, as if sensible of her character and affinities, in plain, unrelieved black from hat to shoes. Our friend, the policeman, did not know her history, but she had been in the haunt long enough to be marked, and as she danced there with reckless spirit among the negroes, the joyless smile that glared on her brazen features, and the long cigar that she held in her almost toothless mouth, gave to her thin, unhealthy face a look more revolting than a skeleton's. Bare death is a more presentable picture than death and damnation together. Many of the dancers smoked through the set, and the fumes that went up, and the ashes that sprinkled about as they shook and swayed to and fro, would have made the

scene, even without the oaths and horse-laughter of the grotesque group, sufficiently demoniac and disgusting.

We turned from the dancers and took a comprehensive view of the surroundings.

“This was Father Mason’s chapel, once,” said our guide. “He used to preach here.”

What a debasement has his chapel suffered! As water seeks its level, rushing in wherever the dykes are gone, sin fills all places as soon as the forces of active goodness cease to occupy. No sooner does the angel of peace and good will to men lift his foot to pass on, than Satan thrusts his cloven hoof into the track.

The old hall had also been a political resort in other days and the emblems of patriotism had never been removed from the walls, but hung ragged, and fly-specked, and smoke-stained along the whole length of the room; pictures of the presidents, the Boston massacre and the battle of Bunker Hill, with representations of the State coat of arms, and the stars and stripes, frowned down upon the revelry as if indignant at being pilloried in a place of shame.

At the farther extremity, over the heads of the musicians appeared the motto, of most dubious application in the premises; “Be just and fear not!” We suggested to the officer that it might be an exhortation to him in the discharge of his duties there. He smiled a grim smile and said nothing.

At length a shout from the head fiddler, “Treat your partners!” stopped the music and broke up the dance. The motley company swarmed towards the bar, drank, laughed, perpetrated obscene jokes, swore, lit new cigars and distributed themselves through the hall in groups and couples, conversing together or shouting across to distant parties, in all the keys of profane nonsense and half-drunken mirth.

One fellow, better dressed than the rest, followed about a shabby, frightened-looking negro, swearing at him, and demanding, with terrific threats, the immediate payment of a debt of five dollars.

"That fellow is a bounty-jumper," said the policeman. "Made fourteen hundred dollars in one day by his lucky operations. Money makes him covetous."

One white woman, with a jammed bonnet and a huge striped zephyr-shawl, whose face looked as if it had been held to the fire until it blistered, made herself prominent with her saucy airs and the coarse liberties she gave herself among the negro men.

"That is the widow——," said our friend, giving her name. "She buried her husband last fall. Didn't put on mourning for him."

Husband! wife! How discordantly the words sounded there! Like the mockery of a blasphemous farce. They brought visions of the home-circle before us. We had left all thoughts of such sacred relationships far behind us when going with the officer his infernal rounds. We should as soon have connected the image of family and home with a den-full of tigers.

An enormous, ox-limbed mulatto crossed the floor to take sides in a threatened scuffle. We inquired who he was.

"That is Bill Gorman," replied the policeman, (we give no real names,) "just served out his term for house-breaking, and has come here to have a good time."

Other remarkables in the assembly were pointed out to us as the figures shifted in the scene. "That black fellow in a soldier cap with rings in his ears; the one on the right of him, talking to the fiddler; the Indian-looking rascal yonder, with the speckled white vest—they are all jail-birds. The flat-faced youngster in a Kossuth hat, with his thumbs in his arm-holes, I have arrested six times. That sneaking-looking white man, talking with the wench in the old cat-skin cape, has been in the penitentiary a year. That girl with the dirty red dress has been three times to the station-house for "shake-down" theft. The quadroon woman laughing so immoderately yonder by the bar has been up at least a dozen times for night-walking."

We had seen enough of this company, and passed out of the

hall, while the voices of the keeper and his minions sounded above the mingling noises, calling for another dance.

Following our guide through a narrow entry, down the crooked, rickety stairs, we emerged into the street. It was dark, and the snow fell faster than ever, while the wind moaned low through the dismal alleys near by, and hissed around the looming gables in chilly, sinister gusts ; but in spite of the storm, suspicious-looking men moved lurkingly hither and thither, the snow thickening on their hats and shoulders, and reckless women and girls flitted shawlless and bonnetless along the pavement, passing and repassing between the different haunts of sin. Glancing up and down, we could see at any moment half a score or more of these denizens of the region of ruin, coming from the door-ways and cross-the streets to vary their entertainment at another house of vice, and our ears were greeted at every step with the echo of noisy instruments and sounds of hollow laughter. Lying mottoes of temptation stared from either side upon the passer-by, offering him "Stranger's Retreat," "Sweet Home," and "Sailor's Rest," and welcoming him to the "Eldorado," the "Bella Union," and "Apollo Hall," while burning in front of these traps of Satan hung gaudy transparencies, that thrust themselves out into the darkness like the faces of fiends in the valley of the shadow of death. We entered one of the "saloons" where a company of white men and women were dancing to the music of a fiddle and a horn.

CHAPTER II.

“O night, when good men rest, when infants sleep!
 To *them* thou art no season of repose,
 But a feared time of waking more intense,
 Of life more keen, of misery more palpable.”

WE left the reader at the door of a dance-house occupied by low whites drinking, and waltzing to the sound of a fiddle and a horn. Here as in the garret we had lately left, we were greeted on our entrance with the sounds of mingled male and female profanity, and the inevitable smell of bad tobacco and worse liquor. The scene before us, however, presented a perceptible variation in the particulars. The room was not so large, but the decorations were more wicked, the mottoes more appropriate to the trade, and the faces of the occupants, being white, showed without any disguise all the coarser lines of the handwriting of vice. One girl with hair cut short like a convict's, and a horn-comb stuck over each ear, had bestowed herself on a side-bench, to enjoy a cigar. Her enjoyment could not have been very soothing, for in her efforts to burn the weed the fire repeatedly fell on her calico dress, and she was occupied for a good part of the time in putting it out.

“These girls have commonly but one dress apiece,” explained our guide. “If they change gowns at all before wearing them out entirely, they change with one another. That girl with the long ear-trinkets has on to-night the gown worn last week by the one near us here, in the black net. Just opposite sits another, who has swapped dresses since last night with the girl you see dancing there with the Irishman. Sometimes they change all around, and it's difficult to sort them out, unless one is familiar with the faces.”

We knew then why the smoker could not afford to burn her calico.

"The girls spend most of their day-time in bed," said the policeman. "When night comes they put on their single suit and are ready for business."

"One would suppose that part of their business is to make themselves attractive," said we.

"They serve easy customers," he replied.

And as we looked around, we fully assented to all he said. New England air never nourished iller-looking fellows than those that loafed there about the bar or mated with the pale, sickly, painted drabs who nightly advertised the saloon. Physical incapability must have exempted many of them from the draft, and certainly the army would be the worse for the best of them. The keeper plied them like one who understood his game. We saw him swing one tall girl, with a bold face, into the centre of the floor, and present her to a rough, shambling stripling, with the abrupt introduction,

"*My wife*, sir; you shall have the first dance with her!"

The fellow muttered something about being unable to dance, and the girl went back by herself, chagrined at the failure of her charms. For this he was obliged to "treat" generously, and the active keeper was behind the counter in time to serve him with a muddy-looking stuff in the bottom of a little tumbler—about six thimbles full. We asked our guide what it was.

"They call it ale," said he. "Begin with the mild varieties, and fire up gradually with stronger when the company get tired."

"How much a glass?" I asked.

"That drink is ten cents," he replied,— "Every thing is ten cents—vary the quantity as the bar-keeper likes. Ten cents is the tariff through all the hells."

I inquired further why the *habitués* appeared so poor. Was it lack of patronage?

"No merchant vessels or men-of-war in port," said the policeman. "No ships, to speak of. When the men-of-war's men get round again the girls will have money, and get new outfits."

"God forbid it!" we thought, and a silent prayer went up that the doors of the Sailor's Home, at the end of the street, might be wide enough open for them to see, when they came, and thus their feet be stayed on the "by-way to hell."

Passing to the other end of the saloon, we observed for the first time, seated near a corner by herself, a female who appeared the picture of despair. Judging from the deep lines and worn expression of her face, she might be forty, but probably, as our friend suggested, she had seen no more than twenty-two years. She took no part in the dances, bestowed little or no notice upon any one in the room, and received as little notice as she bestowed. No one seemed to know her, and she seemed to know no one. In truth, however, she was an old haunter of the place, but she had served her fatal three or four years at the shrine of sensual pleasure, and was worn out. Loathsome disease which invariably fastens upon the devotees of vice was upon her, poisoning her blood and rapidly ruining her system. No one cared for her now. She had ceased to be attractive, and now had nothing to do but hang about her old retreats, trusting to chance for a bit of food to keep life within her, or a tumbler of filthy grog to paralyze memory, until the venom of the stew-house plague shall have completed its fatal work, and, at an age when most young women begin to be wives and mothers, the hands of strangers will drop her into a pauper's grave. There was no emotion visible on her lean face—any more than upon a face of marble. Her eyes, sunken and tearless as eyes of glass, and every feature, long a stranger to signs of virtuous grief, were frozen to the staring stiffness of settled desparation. For smiles there was no place any more forever. Vice had worn the magic off the plate, so that it would no more take the picture of one, and the very frame was worm-eaten; so that when, on the sudden outbreak of some volley of vulgar mirth, we saw her lips twitch with something like the old sympathy, the effect was like galvanism on the lifeless muscles of a dead face. It lasted a second and then faded away—a

ghastly twinkle—saddest conceivable of all melancholy mockeries—and the sin-printed countenance relapsed into its habitual despair. Daughter of wretchedness! Did reflection come to her as she sat there?

“No thought within her bosom stirs
But wakes some feeling dark and dread;
God keep thee from a doom like hers,
Of living when the hopes are dead!”

The dance ended, and the revellers repaired to the bar. We quitted this resort and crossed the street to another. Here the attendance was thin. We did not wonder at it. The room was cold, and the *habitués* were as repulsive looking as could be found anywhere outside of Polynesia.

“Not uglier follow the night-hag, when called
In secret riding through the air she comes,
Lured by the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches.”

Leaving them to pursue their vain attempts at merriment, the men lounging upon the bar, talking very ill-humoredly, and three or four girls jumping about the floor to the sound of an ill-tuned piano, we passed on to another saloon. A bag-pipe greeted us as we went, and we paused long enough to peer down a dirty cellar-way and see a row of nondescript males and females sitting on a bench. The door was fastened back, the proprietors evidently not caring to use a transparency, and the musician was doing his best to entice customers, but the night was bad, and the bag-pipe squealed its asthmatic invitation up to the stormy street in vain. No sympathetic Highlander passed that way to hear the call and follow it into the sty from whence it came. Accustomed to associate little but burlesque with a bag-pipe in America, and looking on the row of old women and smoky Celts and Saxons that sat listening below, we should have laughed, had it not been for the thought that the intention of the performance was none the less wicked for being ridiculous in the details.

We came next to a place called, by a frightful caricature of the name and sentiment, a “home.” Entering through the illuminated door, we saw an old, wrinkled orange-woman engaged in

loud dispute with the proprietor and three or four girls who frequented the place. Seeing the officer, and two strangers with him the man made a great ostentation of fairness, inquired into the matter as if he knew nothing about it before, and felt indignant that a wrong should be committed in his saloon, and then handed the old woman a piece of paper currency, with a peremptory order to make off. Muttering, she lifted her basket and shuffled out with the remains of her oranges. The girls had stolen a portion of her fruit when her back was turned. Here the music was just good enough to be dangerous; a clarionette played by a savage-whiskered Hungarian, and a piano and violin, performed by two good-looking young Americans. The dancing-girls, like those in the hall where we saw the dying prostitute, were all bare-headed and haggard-faced. Mixed among them, as they whirled about the floor, were two young fellows who evidently did not wish to be seen there by respectable people.

They danced with an effort at brazen recklessness but stole glances at us at every turn, as if they half-believed we came there seeking for them or such as they. Their guilty vigilance was disturbed by the sight of unofficial visitors without the flash-house uniform. One of them at length made a little business with the policeman, and improved the occasion to apologize for his presence there, frequently protesting that he had never been in the place before. The other went to the bar and stiffened his courage with a dram. He was a fair-faced, beardless youth—could have been no more than eighteen—with brown hair and dark blue eyes, well-dressed, and to all appearance, a member of some good family. Did his father and mother know where he spent his nights?—their smart, promising boy, sent to the city to serve in a lucrative clerkship, with every prospect of rising in the world? What would they say? Ah, "*What would they say?*" was written in every line of the young man's face, and it was more to his credit than anything he did in that disreputable place, that he could not conceal his uneasiness at being discovered there.

Even the drink did not make him brave. Soon we missed him from the room. He had shot out of the door while we looked another way. May the merciful God follow that boy!

CHAPTER III.

“Regions of sorrow—doleful shades where peace
And rest can never dwell; hope never comes.”

IN our last chapter, we described several cellars and saloons, occupied exclusively by vicious whites. Portugese, Spanish, Italians, Irish, Scotch, French, Germans and—far too many—Americans; each nationality herding in a haunt of its own, ever ready, however, of course, to extend the filthy courtesies of “the trade” to all others.

Our next visit brought us into a hall of colored dancers again. On the way the police officer pointed to a door in the “Italian quarter” which was shut and dark. “A man was murdered in there last night,” said he, (we had read the murder in the morning papers.) “The proprietor killed him. We have shut up his shop now and he is in jail.” What a comment on the efficiency of law in the model city of Boston! Cannot these deus of iniquity be shut until their proprietors commit a regular murder? What but slow murder is the crime they perpetrate every night on the bodies and souls of their customers!

As we entered the negro hall a tumult of obscene merriment burst upon us, and we saw a throng of swarthy forms rushing to and fro, to the music of an old plantation quickstep, in the full tide of vulgar animal delight. Two or three white faces were visible in the scene—and here we will stop to state a fact noticed by us and confirmed by the policeman. Negroes rarely or never

mingle in the revels at the white saloons, though the whites often attend theirs. A vicious white, will sooner mate with a vicious black, than *vice versa*. Those interested in the study of slavery as a "social" system can draw their own inference.

Among the dark dancers appeared one figure that riveted our attention at once. She was a mulatto girl six feet high, well proportioned and muscular as an Amazon. From the deference paid to her by her associates, it was evident that she was the presiding genius of the place.

Her looks and bearing told the same. She was born to lead somewhere, and she chose to lead in sin. Her dress was black, voluminous in fold, abundant in flounces and greasy with reckless use. She wore a black jockey hat streaming with feathers, bracelets on her wrists, piles of rings on her fingers, and a pair of long gew-gaws in her ears, and as she strutted up and down the floor loud and harsh of voice, and flaring of front and feature, the descriptive fancy of the looker-on instinctively selected her title and dubbed her "the Black Peacock." No one watching her, could doubt for a moment that she had gone through all the flash schools and graduated with the honors, for she sported with the ease and *abandon* of an expert all the first-class accomplishments of her profession, dancing, swearing, vulgarity, drinking, smoking and chewing. Indeed, as our guide remarked, her very style of spitting showed character—with a vengeance.

As might be expected, the lesser lights of the ball-room passed into eclipse before the pomp of the Black Peacock. Not a female—or a male—in all the company possessed the genius or (probably) the *means* to match her audacious display. All apparently acquiesced in her supremacy, and revolved contentedly around her will, for they ginned and chatted with great good humor as they swarmed after her in the dance, the men taking no umbrage at being flung about in her big arms like playthings, and the women betraying no jealousy as they eyed her flying trappings, and copied involuntarily her decisive manœuvres.

“She is a notorious creature,” said the policeman, “From New York not long ago. Makes periodical visits here for a change, and picks up what green plunder she can. For aught I know, she gives lessons to the Boston ‘fancy.’”

Comprehensive description. Of how many both black and white, could the man at our side, in the blue coat, with the star on his breast, thus indicate the brief biography of vice? He had been on that beat nine years.

There came a pause in the fiddling, and the Black Peacock and her followers swept by us to the bar, their hot breath heavy with the stench of onions and bad rum, and noisome with the ribaldry of the pot-house. We had seen the chief “attraction” of that haunt and turned to go, but a sight more moving than the gaudy mulatto wench, caught our eye as we approached the door. It was a little white boy—he could scarcely be more than nine years old—with only one arm and a face that bore the unmistakable signs of the idiocy of vice.

He was one of those children of the street whose infancy hears no lullabies; and to whose rising years no mother or tender motherly friend represents the precious providence of God. No sweet toned prayers at his cradle-head or bedside had soothed the heart and instructed the tongue of this young unfortunate. The blasphemies of the dance-house and the foul examples of the gambling den and the brothel had been his education; obscenity and the loud orgies of unblushing shame, in place of primer-hymns and loving fire-side counsels that open the door to Life.

We saw him rise from a low bench where he had been sitting, staring vacantly at the revelry, and shuffle toward an ill-looking, middle-aged negress, making signs as if he wanted something. The negress appeared not to disown him, but with the complaisance which always exists among the abandoned who help each other on to damnation, felt in her pocket and gave him a dime. The boy took the scrip with a contortion of his features that was meant for a smile, but more resembled the grimace of a

monkey. Holding his money tightly in his one hand, he worked his way to the bar where he gulped down the liquor that was served out to him, as if it had been mother's milk.

Dismissing ourselves gladly from this chamber of sin, we closed the door behind us and passed on. The next hall into which the policeman pushed his way, astonished us by the number of extreme youth assembled there.

They have but just begun the career of vice here, we think. The old Ann-street Seminary has shown us its advanced classes, and here is the primary department. No ; we are mistaken. This haunt is well known and is one of the wickedest. These girls of fifteen and sixteen, instead of being the most hopeful cases, are some of the most hopeless. An engagement here is generally an engagement for life—for *death*. Death by reckless, rapid plunges ; death to each, and to all ; half murder, and half suicide, without thought, without pity, without (if possible) one backward look. A desperate dissolution, blind, willful ; no Abraham to hear their cry, no Lazarus, to cool their tongue !

Marvellously pitiful to look upon are these poor young pupils in crime. *Children*—of an age when life is fain to date its halcyon days and still prolong to its possessors the unsophisticated sweetness of early innocence ; when boys are wont to be yet the denizens of the homestead, and girls—heaven save the mark !—by every law of rational fitness should be taking lessons of their mothers in the genial science of housekeeping, or trundling hoop on the play-ground.

Dear God ! That there should be so many trained wide of thy kind laws—grown and cultured by violence, and forced in childhood to a maturity of shame !

Before us were no less than twenty of these young girls, hprecocious in depravity, and already accomplished in the horrid course that learns woman so surely how to unsex herself, and sear t about all the native delicacy of her soul. Not one of these creatures p can blush. See with what unflinching effrontery they face their

leering, foul-mouthed male companions. They seldom laugh—till brought under the influence of liquor. The broadest jest provokes in them little appearance of emotion. The spirit in them is dead, and the countenances that once sparkled with it have settled over the inward ruin, grim and rigid, and pale as the ashes of an extinguished fire on the hearthstone. If ever they part their lips, they betray the inevitable toothless decay we have spoken of, that the unrestrained indulgence of the animal passions is sure to bring upon the youngest and fairest—the inward leprosy rotting away, first the foundations of virtue, and then the tissues of beauty.

If among the score of young castaways in this place of sin, there was one exception to what has been said, it was in the instance of a flaxen-haired, frail-looking girl, seated on a stool by the stove. Near her was a sort of moveable screen, behind which through a door concealed by it, ever and anon, couples tired of dancing and drinking retired together, into the *penetralia* of crime. The eyes of the poor girl glanced alternately an uneasy look at that door and at the bar-keeper who was her employer, as if she longed to hide herself, in no matter how wicked a retreat, from the hollow parade of pleasure that flared in the gas-light, before her. A new grouping of the ever moving parties on the floor brought a shadow between her and the bar, and in an instant she glided out of sight. Some nameless yearning for a better past, and a lost future mayhap crossed the poor child's heart. She was the skeleton at the feast and the revellers could not wish her among them again—though we could not doubt that the cruel hands that made gain of her ruined girlhood would drag her back, and force her at the rope's end to take her place once more, and yet once more, amid those bitter mimicries of mirth.

In each and all of these halls of sinful pleasure you can find that "skeleton" if you will look for it.

We passed out of this place as the clocks of the city tolled twelve. Have we seemed to describe the characters we have

seen as entirely outside the pale of grace? Their state is indeed a warning sufficiently solemn, but God is great.

Lights blazed at the windows of a tall building before us and a sign swung out into the night, strangely at variance with the genius of the neighborhood and the hour—"Quincy Home for the friendless." The door was open for the penitent and a prayer meeting, begun at midnight, was being held in an upper-room. We entered—across the street from hell to heaven! "Blessed are the merciful." That blessing shall fall upon the head of good Brother Stowe, and the noble men and women who aided him to fix that institution there, carrying, in the true spirit of the Saviour, the gospel down to those who would never come up to its sanctuaries to receive it. Yes, *there is* hope even for the abandoned of North End. A goodly number of unfortunate females occupied seats in the prayer-chamber, modestly waiting

"———with looks

Downcast and damp; yet such wherein appeared

Obscure some glimpse of joy. • • •

• • • to have found themselves not lost

In loss itself"

One young woman rose and told her story. In early days she had a respectable mother and been taught thrifty and decent ways. When of sufficient age to support herself she had come to the city for employment and fell among false friends who promised her an easy life and, with the hospitality of devils, put to her lips the poison that steals away the brains. She became intoxicated, and while in this condition was enrolled inevitably with the votaries of vice. "Drink did it! drink did it!" she exclaimed "and but for that dear good Christian"—pointing to a lady who had won her from her wicked life—"I should have kept on, going lower and lower, until I lost my soul." Several others like herself rose and uttered the same language of penitence and trembling hope, and at a signal from the chaplain all kneeled down while he led them in prayer. The noise of the bacchanals at their late orgies across

the street penetrated the holy silence, but over it all breathed in that upper chamber the tender voice of Christ, "Thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace."

We followed our guide down the stairs, full of strange meditations on the contiguities of good and evil in life, and silent petitions to Him who in wrath remembers mercy.

It was past one o'clock, and the storm was at its height, but still, up and down the dark length of Boston's "Rotten Row" stared through the hurling snow, the red eyes of the destroyer, and a hundred mouths of Death gaped hungrily for further prey. We entered but one more of the drinking shops that lined the sidewalks. The bar-keeper was a woman. And *such* a woman! She should have been labelled to mark her sex, if not indeed her humanity. Old lord Lechery was certainly her cousin-german. There she sat lolling behind her counter, too sleepy to notice anything but the money that dropped into her till, an unwieldy heap of diseased flesh, asthmatic, gouty and disgusting. Sensuality had bloated her face till all the features ran together leaving it as expressionless—barring its vicious rubicundity—as the head of a grub. Caricature never depicted a grosser creature.

Here was one of the *school-mistresses* of the American Athens! One of a corps of some nineteen hundred teachers whose business it is to graduate every year fifteen or twenty pupils apiece to the prisons and poor-houses. Look at her! Can any one doubt how well qualified she is for her work—morally, mentally, and physically? It is to such portresses of hell that much of the public education of our cities is left. Had our Legislature better *license* this sort of thing, and organize into a system, a business that sends annually five thousand more to jail than go to the common schools, and consumes more than half a million dollars in making drunkards and libertines, to every hundred thousand spent in training up good citizens? It needs no prophetic penetration to see that the interest of the rum-seller is involved in every enterprize and effort of systematized vice. As the farmer

supports every branch of social prosperity, so the rumseller supplies and almost *stocks* every branch and department of social crime and misery. *No* iniquitous business can be carried on without him. Gambling, and prostitution, and midnight robbery absolutely *depend* on him, and his poison is the inspiration of counterfeiters, pickpockets and sneak thieves. The vicious know what he is to them and give him all their votes, and hang his picture lovingly on their walls. Over the shelves in this miserable "saloon," kept by the beer-bloated old bar-woman, we saw in a large frame the half-size portrait of Cornelius O'Doherty, a wholesale liquor-dealer, who for years supplied the low haunts of North End with rum and gin, and made every gambler and pimp and unwashed thief an agent of his trade. He would not feel at all dishonored (and certainly he *is* not) by having his photograph paraded in the dens whose patronage made him rich.

The frequenters of this last haunt need no description—further than has already been given. In point of personal attractions the loathsome proprietress had no reason to be jealous of her customers. Men and women, all wore the same blear-eyed, immoral look; their frames deformed by debauchery—their countenances imbruted and brazen with continual sin; "faces" (in Alexander Smith's graphic words) "that contained the debris of the ten commandments; faces that hurt you more than a blow would." A fitting throng of attendants for the presence-chamber of Crime, assembling night after night to celebrate the solemnities of ruin:

Heartily sick of our sight-seeing we gladly turned our steps away and accompanied our friend, the policeman, to the Station. The snow had deepened in the street, and the storm roared loud in the sky, but the sound of pandemoniac revelry, heard all the way, made us deaf to its grum voices, and bare-headed Magdalens flitting from door to door appeared and vanished like lost spirits inhabiting the inclement air; and we thought as we looked back on the fading lights and escaped the noises, and sights, and scents, of that neighborhood of horrors, within the very gates of a Christ-

ian city, and within the very sound of Christian church-bells, of the fearful place so vividly described by Bunyan, at the very feet of the Delectable Mountains, and whose view saddened the pilgrims in the midst of their joy. "Then I saw in my dream that the shepherds had them to another place at the bottom, where was a door, in the side of a hill; and they opened the door and bid them look in. They looked in, therefore, and saw that within it was very dark and smoky. They also thought that they heard there, a rumbling noise as of fire, and a cry of some tormented, and they smelt the scent of brimstone. Then said Christian, "what means this." The shepherds told them, "This is the BY-WAY TO HELL!"

MAGGIE'S VIGIL.

One chilly night last week, a little half-clad girl about five years old was found sitting on a door-step on Cambridge street waiting for a police officer to go and arrest her father who, as she said, "comes home drunk every night and beats mother and me." *Traveller, Oct. 22, 1866.*

T. B., IN WATCHMAN AND REFLECTOR.

The loving stars looked sober
And hid their eyes away
In the brown clouds of October
That sailed o'er Boston Bay;
Alone in the great city
Friendless and five years old
(O sight to move God' pity!)
Sat Maggie in the cold.

With one rag to defend her,
All loosely round her cast,
Her body blue and slender
Shook in the misty blast.
And tragic art might borrow
From eyes that should have smiled
That stare of tearless sorrow
So fearful in a child.

Midnight from tower and steeple
Rang out in brazen peals,
And ceased the hum of people,
And died the roar of wheels;
While dark by wall and column
The silence folded down,
But still her vigil solemn
Kept little Maggie Brown.

The iron lamps burn paler—
Down all their glimmering row
Her weary eyes must fail her
To hold their watch of wo.
She starts—"He's comin' yonder!"
And one patrolman grim
Before her stops in wonder;
What can she want with him?

"Why wait you here, my strayling?"
He said and closer drew.
She answered half in wailing
"An' sure I wait for you."

"For me?" "For you," and clearly
She told her frightened tale
'Tis time he'll come, or nearly;
O take my pa to jail!

"It's little I'd be carin'
But every night, you see
He comes home drunk an' swearin'
An' beats my ma an' me.
Ye'll find him at McCarters';
Ye'll know him by his clothes,—
Blue coat an' hat in tatters
An' a blotch upon his nose.

"Sure, small's the slape we git, sir,
Wi' listenin' o'er an' o'er
An' ma to wape an' frit, sir,
An' watch the stair-way door.
She'll stau' no more the batin'
For she is sick an' pale,
An' that's for you I'm watin'
'Lo take my pa to jail."

The watchman stooped to smother
His feeling in his frown
And softly to her mother
Bore little Maggie Brown.
Then swift with indignation
To seek her sire he passed
And soon old Second Station
Confined the drunkard fast.

Ye rulers, set for keeping
Unruly souls in awe,
How many a child is weeping
Whose only hope is law?
O, let your faithful doing
Avenge their infant wail,
On them who sell the ruin
That sends their sires to jail.

